

National Park Service
2014 Environmental Achievement Awards

Honorable Mention

First Climate Friendly Park in Texas
San Antonio Missions National Historical Park

San Antonio Missions National Historical Park (SAAN) was designated as the first Climate Friendly Park in Texas in 2013. This recognition was the culmination of a long history of environmental stewardship at the park. The staff at SAAN have maintained a formal Environmental Management System (EMS) program since 2003. The current EMS program brings SAAN in compliance with Executive Orders 13514 and 13423, Department of Interior and National Park Service directives, plans, and strategies such as the Green Parks Plan and the Climate Change Action Plan, and advances Goal #23 of a Call to Action.

Several significant achievements led to the Climate Friendly Parks designation at SAAN in 2013. Park fuel use was reduced by adding two propane powered trucks, an electric sedan, and an electric utility truck. Nearly half of the park's fleet is now either propane or electric. Electric vehicle charging stations were installed at the park for NPS and visitor use. Park staff were awarded a Clean Cities grant to host a public event on alternative fueled vehicles.

Park staff used the information from a recent energy audit to further reduce park energy use, installing over 225 LED lamps throughout the park to replace incandescent bulbs. Water use was also curtailed through the installation of aerators on all faucets.

Solid waste was a third area of focus for park staff, and in 2013, park staff stopped selling any bottled water, and instead installed bottle filling stations in visitor areas. Using a single-stream recycling service and recycling all tires, wood pallets, and scrap metal allowed park staff to increase the solid waste diversion rate to 65%. New recycling containers were added to high visitor use areas and recycling efforts were expanded at special events.

The staff at SAAN demonstrate commitment to environmental stewardship and responsibility throughout all aspects of park operations. As a whole, they have worked even beyond the parks boundaries to expand environmental partnerships and community engagement. SAAN partnered with the City of San Antonio to expand the B-cycle Bike Share program to all primary visitor use areas, allowing visitors to travel by bike throughout the park and even continue on to downtown San Antonio. SAAN's Mission San Jose bike station is now the most active B-cycle location in the city.